

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NATURE OF DISEASE JOURNAL (Vol. III.). By J. E. R. McDonagh, F.R.C.S. 10s. 6d. net.

The Nature of Disease Journal (Vol. III.), by Mr. J. E. R. McDonagh, is a further exposition of this author's views: the subjects treated of include the Origin and Nature of Disease, Rheumatism, Disease and Women, Infections from within, etc.

The origin of the earth is traced back to the condensation of primitive material filling the limitless space of the universe; continuation of this condensation on earth "has led to the establishment of a disequilibrium (or disharmony) between the bodies condensed. Life is one of the products of this disequilibrium: it has also generated disease and the inevitable result is death. Disease is the halfway house between life and death, and all three occur in exactly the same way in which the solar system was brought into being."

Many of the conclusions reached appear to be based solely on the author's intellectual surmise, others on rather unconvincing arguments or incomplete or doubtful premises. Thus, while many clinicians recognise the importance of chronic intestinal toxic absorption as a factor in the production of disease, few will accept in their entirety such statements as "Pneumonia is primarily not a bacterial disease and this is true also of rheumatic fever and scarlet fever. The basis of these three lesions is a chronic intestinal intoxication . . .," or, "a true gonococcal arthritis is a comparative rarity, and then it represents no more than the last stage of a cycle of events, set in motion by a much more important agent than the gonococcus, viz., the chronic intestinal intoxication."

In Mr. McDonagh's view "intestinal intoxication has become an almost universally inherited condition," which paves the way for autogenous infections caused by the pathogenic mutation forms of the *Bacillus coli communis*; the phylogenesis of these forms is tabulated and an attempt made to show their cyclical occurrence and relation to epidemics.

The keynote of Mr. McDonagh's treatment is the elimination of the primary causative factor of intestinal intoxication by mechanical cleansing along with the establishment of artificial immunity to the invading organisms by chemical or bacterial derivative injections.

While Mr. McDonagh must be given credit for his industry and courage in groping after and proposing a new, and medically revolutionary, concept of the origin and evolution of disease, we feel that the views expressed in this volume will not meet with unreserved acceptance until more convincing proofs of their accuracy and value in therapeutic application are adduced.

A. E. W. M.